

Feb 27, 2021

Clerk Energy & Technology Committee
CT

Dear Energy & Technology Committee,

After nearly two decades of implementing legislative and regulatory policies meant to protect ratepayers, it is time to tell third-party electric suppliers that this is their last chance. Their often abusive, and at times illegal, marketing tactics will no longer be tolerated.

6 years ago CT ratepayers banned variable rate electric contracts due to their predatory nature, yet there are still 25,000 households in an automatically renewed variable rate contract. Most of those and other ratepayers are paying more than the standard service rate.

In the last six years alone, ratepayers who use a third-party supplier have paid over \$274 million more versus those who get their supply from the regulated utilities standard service supply offer. Much of this is because of a flaw in the law that allows a supplier to auto renew me as a customer when my contract expires. The terms of this auto-renewed contract almost always has higher rates than the standard offer from the utilities.

It is critical that you pass HB 6526, An Act Concerning Electric Suppliers, and retain language that would end all auto-renew contracts and the elimination of cancellation fees..

Choosing an electric supplier is confusing, complex and costly even without the tricks of some unscrupulous suppliers. Despite the enactment of major consumer protections by the Connecticut Legislature in 2014 and 2015, ratepayers in the third-party market are still being harmed. The Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (PURA) has reached enforcement settlements against the various suppliers that have been in the millions of dollars.

It is clear to me that without the strong consumer protection language currently in HB 6526, the market will not work. Please look out for ratepayers and ensure that I will not be automatically renewed into a contract that costs me more than the standard service. It is also critical that if I am lured into a bad deal I do not have to pay a cancellation fee to get out of it.

Sincerely,

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